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LELY LAUNCHES “FEED THE FUTURE”: THE FIRST CROSS-INDUSTRY INNOVATION CHALLENGE FOR STARTUPS TO REVOLUTIONISE DAIRY FARMING

The first edition of the ‘Feed the Future by Lely’ challenge is launched today and calls to the next generation of tech pioneers to innovate and feed the dairy industry with technology solutions. Lely, the leading supplier of robotics and management data for the dairy farm, and Rockstart, one of Europe’s first startup accelerators, aim to scout talented tech entrepreneurs who think outside the box and are up to the challenge to apply their tech solutions to the dairy farming process. The applications for the first Feed the Future challenge will be open from 27 August to 6 October 2019.

The global challenges of population growth and climate change demand innovative solutions to feed the future. Innovations that will allow us to become more sustainable, transparent, time-efficient, and improve the quality of life of men and animals when producing food.

Cross-industry innovation

By exchanging cross-industry knowledge between Lely and the startups, the Feed the Future challenge seeks to find new tech innovations, still unknown to the dairy industry, which can be applied to the farming process of thousands of dairy farmers worldwide.

Alexander van der Lely, CEO at Lely, explains the goal of this challenge: “We really should understand the problems and challenges on a dairy farm and find solutions, of which the farmer doesn’t know he or she needs them yet. That is real innovation. At Lely, we are always searching for technologies that we can apply in the agricultural sector. Startups are very important for our future. We devote a lot of time to develop innovations, but we cannot do this all by ourselves. There are many more new technologies coming out in the world. That’s why we really want to combine our creative energy with the creative energy of startups to find new ingenious solutions in dairy farming.”

Revolutionising dairy farming

Feed the Future is specifically looking for startups using promising, new technologies to make a positive impact. Innovative solutions in predictive analytics, the internet of things, robotics, voice and image recognition, are all examples of software and hardware solutions that have the potential to significantly contribute to the optimisation of dairy farming. Only when we measure and capture data of the animal’s surroundings and its well-being, we can feed the world better. We have the opportunity to become smarter and more sustainable in production of dairy, for example to reduce emissions and limit the use of resources such as water and energy.

"At Rockstart, we aspire to give startups the best access possible to market, capital, community, and expertise. We believe there is a need for disruption in agriculture to build a more sustainable future, and startups play a key role in this transition. We are excited to collaborate with Lely and launch Feed the Future together, and help startups to drive positive change with a strong partner", said Rune Theill, CEO and co-founder of Rockstart.

More Than Funding

The 10 best startups will be invited for the Finals on 20 and 21 November 2019 at the Lely Campus, in the Netherlands. The winner will get the unique chance to collaborate with one of the most innovative companies in the world. Not only will the winning startups receive prize money of €15.000 but also an opportunity for large investment and strategic support from Lely, including access to its worldwide extensive network. Startups eligible to apply need to have at least a *proof of concept or MVP*. The challenge is open to entrepreneurs worldwide with a market focus preferably on Europe or North America.

To apply for the ‘Feed the Future’ challenge, visit www.feedthefuture.io

About Lely

Lely, founded in 1948, directs all its efforts towards creating a sustainable, profitable and enjoyable future in farming. Circling the cow, the company develops premium robotics and data systems that increase animal welfare, flexibility and the production on the dairy farm.

For more than 25 years, Lely has been leading in the sale and service of automated milking systems to successive generations of dairy farmers across the globe. Every day, Lely inspires her employees to offer customers innovative solutions and be a reliable partner for long-term advice and support. With its head office in The Netherlands and a worldwide network of dedicated Lely Center locations for tailor-made sales and support, the Lely Group is active in more than 40 countries and employs around 1.500 people.

www.lely.com

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ABOUT ROCKSTART

Launched in 2011, Rockstart has accelerated over 150 startups across four core domains that have raised a total of over €87 million and generated more than 700 jobs. Passionate about driving positive change with teams from all over the world, Rockstart plans to support and invest in more than 200 startups in its core domains over the next five years, providing follow-on capital and unparalleled access to the market along the way. To do that, the accelerator partners with large players in respective industries to connect startups to their first customers and foster collaborative innovation.

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